

WASHINGTON – Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, a senior member of the House Ways & Means and Budget Committees, issued the following statement regarding H.R. 2401, the Transparency in Regulatory Analysis of Impacts on the Nation (TRAIN) Act:

“Under the guise of asking for more information, the TRAIN Act delays two of the most crucial clean air protections of the last decade. It is a blatant giveaway to polluters that will cost thousands of American lives and hundreds of billions of dollars in preventable healthcare needs. For my colleagues who keep repeating the claim that delaying pollution protections is something we need to do because of the recession, we should be very clear: delaying these clean air protections will have an overall negative impact on the economy by dramatically increasing healthcare costs.

“Mercury, arsenic and chromium are poisons to the human body. They damage the developing brains of children, cause heart attacks and many forms of cancer, and threaten women who are pregnant. Every year that the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards are delayed by a Congress that ignores the needs of American families, 17,000 people will die prematurely, hospitals will see 12,000 preventable new visits, and Americans will suffer 120,000 needless cases of aggravated asthma. Every year of delay will cost our healthcare system at least \$60 billion and perhaps as much as \$140 billion. This is between 5 and 13 times the cost of simply complying with the new pollution standards.

“The TRAIN Act also delays the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which cuts down on the air pollution that people are forced to breathe that’s blown into their communities from belching smokestacks two or three states away. Every year these protections are delayed, another 34,000 people will die prematurely, hospitals will see 19,000 unnecessary new visits, and Americans will suffer 400,000 needless cases of aggravated asthma. This will cost our beleaguered healthcare system another \$120 billion to \$280 billion a year, a staggering 150 to 350 times the cost of just implementing the pollution controls.

“Americans overwhelmingly support government protections that keep our air safe to breathe, our water safe to drink and our food safe to eat. Stripping those protections away will cost lives and money, and it is wrong on every level.”

